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AUTHOR	Enell, Nancy C.
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ABSTRACT

To determine the success of mainstreaming programs for special education students, interviews were conducted with teachers, peers, and 40 elementary, intermediate and high school students from four disability groups: blindness and partial vision, deafness and hard of hearing, orthopedic or health impairments, and mental retardation. Regular teachers learned that children learned in many different ways, some reporting an increased effectiveness as instructors. Teachers revealed a tendency to have lower expectations of special education students at first. Students reported they felt comfortable and welcome in the regular classroom and preferred it to the special class. Regular students were unanimous in expressions of acceptance. Suggestions are made to administrators for improving the special education mainstreaming program. (Author/CL)

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The Effects of Regular Classroom Integration for Special Education Students with Visual, Auditory, Physical and Mental Impairments

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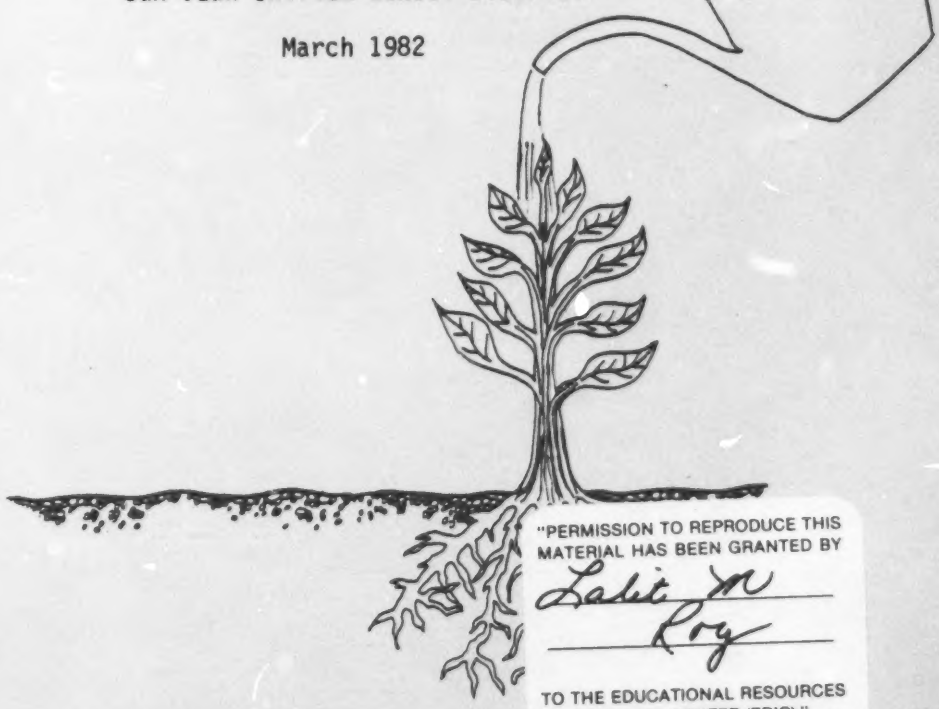
Nancy C. Enell

Principal Investigator
San Juan Unified School District

March 1982



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FORWARD

The study reported here is part of a series of research and evaluation studies in special education conducted by the San Juan Unified School District, Department of Research and Evaluation.

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Disclaimer

This report is presented for distribution as a technical report under the grant. The results and interpretations of the study are the professional work of the investigators, and do not represent nor imply an official position or policy of the California State Department of Education.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HIGHLIGHTS OF A STUDY OF REGULAR CLASSROOM INTEGRATION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS WITH VISUAL, AUDITORY, PHYSICAL AND MENTAL IMPAIRMENTS

THE PURPOSE

The underlying motive for the study was to determine the successes and problems of the efforts made by the San Juan Unified School District in mainstreaming these children into regular classrooms.

THE PROCEDURE

The four groups of special education students interviewed were the blind and partially sighted, the deaf and hard-of-hearing, the orthopedically or other health impaired students, and the mentally retarded.

Forty students from 17 elementary, intermediate, and high schools were randomly selected to be part of the survey. Ten students from each of the four handicapped categories were interviewed. For each student a special education teacher, a regular teacher, and a peer from the regular classroom were interviewed. Also interviewed were teachers in other special categories, such as the mobility training instructors and the vocational education advisors. Additionally, employers were interviewed at the work sites of some mentally retarded students.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Regular teachers reported that when they began to deal with special education students they had to learn new ways to teach them. Their traditional instructions simply didn't apply to children who couldn't hear them, couldn't see them, or couldn't move around in the same way their regular children did. Through learning techniques from special education teachers, and devising new methods of their own, teachers discovered that children learned in many different ways. Regular students benefitted from the new learning techniques, too. One teacher disclosed he felt he had become a more effective instructor because he was reaching more students with his use of new learning techniques.

Teachers revealed their tendencies to have lower expectations of special education students at first. They discovered that given proper motivation most of these children learned as easily as the regular students. The instructors learned if they babied or coddled the handicapped children some would take advantage of their disabling conditions and would not benefit from the regular classroom experience.

Special education students reported that they felt very comfortable and welcome in the regular classrooms. They also expressed the fact that they liked the regular classroom better than their special education classes. Some of the other special education students said it made them feel good to be able to help regular students. The mentally retarded students who worked in the community said that the experience made them feel important.

Regular students were unanimous in their expressions of acceptance of the special education students in their classrooms, and were anxious to help them whenever they could. They reported that the special education kids even helped them with their school work.

Special education teachers and regular classroom teachers established a strong rapport and were able to promote a better mainstreaming experience.

PROJECT STAFF AND SPECIAL REPORTS

The study was directed by the Special Education Evaluation Specialist. A former special education teacher from the district conducted the interviews, and a former high school teacher of Journalism and English wrote the reports. Illustrations for the brochure were done by a classroom secondary art teacher.

A brochure has been written based on the experiences and comments of regular and special education teachers to help future teachers of the special education handicapped. It's entitled "Tips for Teachers," and will be available to teachers in the Fall of 1982.

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SECTION I

Introduction to the Study

SECTION I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Since the passage of Public Law 94-142, which mandated public educators to provide "free, appropriate, public education" for handicapped children in "non-restrictive environments," researchers have been busy evaluating school programs to determine what progress is being made in integration or "mainstreaming."

In the past five years two integration studies, an initial and a follow-up, were made in a large Northern California school district, the San Juan Unified School District. These studies concentrated upon the learning handicapped students served in special classes and by the Resource Specialist Program. Each of these studies involved interviews with regular and special education teachers and students to assess the effects of Public Law 94-142 and California's Master Plan for Special Education on student integration and on teacher satisfaction. In the 1978 study, 200 interviews were held, and in 1980 nearly 150 persons were interviewed. The results of the follow up study in 1980 revealed that the stigma associated with special education in 1978 had decreased considerably. Students indicated that they were being helped and teachers found improvements in both academic skills and social skills for learning handicapped special education students. Regular students reported friends in both Resource and special classes.

The Purpose of the Study

The underlying motive for this study was to determine the successes and problems of the efforts made by the San Juan School District in mainstreaming children with handicaps other than learning problems into regular classrooms. From the experiences of these teachers and students suggestions can be provided for other teachers facing such integration.

Procedure for the Study

The four groups of special education students selected for the study were the blind and partially sighted, the deaf and hard-of-hearing, the orthopedically or other health impaired students, and the mentally retarded.

Forty students from 17 elementary, intermediate, and high schools were randomly selected to be part of the survey. Ten students from each of the four handicapped categories were interviewed. For each student a peer from the regular classroom was interviewed.

The special education teacher or specialist and the regular teacher who worked with each of these students were also interviewed. Specifically, there were nine resource teachers with special education credentials interviewed, and eight special day class, special education credentialed teachers. There were five designated instruction service providers interviewed: one orientation and mobility trainer for the blind, two DIS teachers who provided braille and larger print materials for the blind, one DIS interpreter for the deaf, and one adaptive P.E. teacher for the physically handicapped. Also interviewed were two regional occupational program teachers, and two employers at the work sites of some mentally retarded students.

Interviews were conducted at the following 17 school sites:

Elementary Schools	Intermediate Schools	High Schools
Del Paso Manor	Barrett	Del Campo
Le Gette	Arden	La Sierra
Starr King Regular	Starr King Regular	Mira Loma
Arlington	Pasteur	El Camino
Roberts		San Juan
Oakview		Casa Roble
Palisades		
Laurel Ruff		

In preparation for the survey, introductory letters were sent to principals of schools involved, including a list of the special education students, an abstract from the proposed study, and a sample copy of questions that would be asked of the teachers of each group.

When the interviews were complete, a three-person group including the project director, investigator and assistant investigator read and analyzed the interview findings. Content differences between the handicap groups and by those at different school levels were studied. Based upon these findings, the technical report was prepared and ideas for a brochure were developed.

The study was directed by the Special Education Evaluation Specialist. A former special education teacher from the district in the Early Retiree Program conducted the interviews, and a former high school teacher of Journalism and English wrote the reports. Illustrations were done by a classroom secondary art teacher.

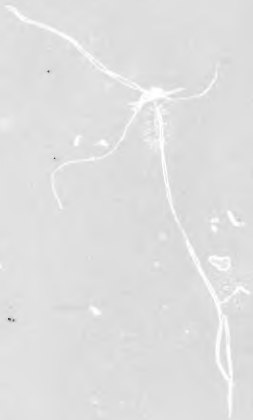
Organization of Report

The information gathered from the interviews pertaining to each of the four handicap groups is presented in the next four sections (Sections II through V). Each section identifies the number and type of persons interviewed, and presents the responses from the special education staff, regular teachers, special education and regular students related to that handicap group.

The final two sections (Sections VI and VII) present the suggestions for the special education administrators of the district where the study was conducted, and an overall summary of the findings.

Distribution of Information

This study was prepared for distribution to the directors of special education programs in California. It will be reported at future state and national research meetings. A brochure has been written entitled "Tips for Teachers" which is available for reproduction by all interested districts. Highlights from the study have been assembled and reported to the Community Advisory Committee for special education and to the special education program specialists. Suggestions to administrators have also been reported to the district special education management.



SECTION II

The Mainstreaming of the Visually Blind and Partially Sighted Special Education Students into the Regular Classroom

SECTION II

THE MAINSTREAMING OF THE VISUALLY BLIND AND PARTIALLY SIGHTED SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS INTO THE REGULAR CLASSROOM

The eleven visually handicapped subjects studied included six blind (two elementary, two intermediate, two high school) and five partially sighted (two elementary, two intermediate, one high school) students. Ten of their peers were interviewed as were ten regular teachers. There were eight special education teachers who worked with these students, including three resource specialists, one special day class, two vision specialists, one orientation and mobility training specialist and one adaptive P.E. teacher.

Special Education Teacher Responses

Special education teachers realized that their blind handicapped students required more time to do certain tasks, and seemed to need more clarification and repetition of directions from their instructors. Some teachers stated they cut their lunch hours shorter to work with the blind students, or spent time with them after school in order to accommodate the special needs of their handicapped students. All special education teachers had to supply the braillist with student lessons ahead of time so they could be prepared in braille or larger print for the blind students. Teachers agreed that this was not a problem.

The greatest concerns of special education teachers with respect to having blind students in their classes were those of keeping the handicapped students caught up academically with the regular students; improving their skills in some weak areas; and correlating their daily living and mobility skills with their academic skills.

Suggestions made by special education teachers to future regular teachers were that they expect the blind or partially sighted students to keep up with other regular students. Future teachers were advised to keep the students organized in their assignments and to take care to remember the limitations of blind students. Especially important was that future teachers be aware of these students' needs and feelings in order to maintain the self-esteem of their pupils.

Although teachers agreed that communication between special education teachers and special education administrative staff was very good this year,

they felt that more inservice with problem-solving situations was needed for the regular teachers before the handicapped students were mainstreamed into their classrooms. There was overall good rapport among administrators and special education and regular teachers.

Special education teachers felt that regular students with blind or partially sighted students in their classes had the opportunity to experience what it was like to be blind, and became more thoughtful and caring toward the blind and partially sighted student as a result. Teachers agreed that regular students, through this enriching experience, became more socially aware. Specifically, students discovered that blind students were very much like they were.

Regular Teacher Responses

There was a consensus of agreement among regular classroom teachers that there were positive experiences for students with a blind or partially sighted student in their room. According to regular teachers it gave children an awareness of blind handicaps. Regular students were very helpful and caring. Having the blind students in their classrooms made no problems except sometimes the progress of the class was impeded due to the need for repetition or clarification to handicapped students by the teacher.

Regular teachers' responses to the special needs of the blind and partially sighted were simply that all materials and tests needed to be sent to the blind resource center in time for brailling or enlargement. This necessitated good planning ahead which regular teachers adjusted to with few problems. The handicapped needed some extra time to finish their work at school, but teachers found this no problem either.

Teachers had many different concerns about having blind students in their classrooms and gave a variety of suggestions for future teachers who would have visually handicapped students. Some of these suggestions were to make sure the room arrangement was not changed from day to day. In order to get information across to students, verbalizing and clarity of information were emphasized. Sending written materials to the resource center ahead of time so that support personnel could make them adaptive for students was another concern. Teachers agreed that having an on-site or itinerant support teacher was very helpful for providing adequate materials in large print or braille.

The consensus of regular teachers was that special education teachers and special education administrators, in some cases, could better integrate blind and partially sighted children by providing a tutor to help with individual problems. It was strongly suggested that regular classes containing handicapped children be smaller. There was a definite need for communication and inservicing for the regular teachers before getting handicapped students. One teacher suggested

that video tapes could be made of teachers who have had success integrating students in their classes. It was emphasized that it was important for teachers to be aware of things students were capable of doing, and not just be concerned about their limitations.

Special Education Student Responses

Blind and partially sighted students all liked the integration with regular students and the regular teachers. They all felt they had friends in both special and regular classes, but usually had more friends in regular classes.

When blind handicapped students were in a regular teacher's class, they felt they received help from other students when it was needed.

Although blind and partially sighted students had little opportunity to help other students in their special education class due to individualized programs, they did help the other students in their regular classes with homework. Special education students wanted to be more helpful and felt they could do more to help teachers and other students if they were just called upon to do so.

Regular Student Responses

Regular students welcomed every opportunity to help the blind and partially sighted student in their classes and on the school grounds. Regular students explained that the blind and partially sighted students were good listeners and that most of the handicapped were willing to help them when asked. They all liked having the handicapped children in the class.

SECTION III

The Mainstreaming of Deaf and Severely Hard of Hearing Special Education Students into the Regular Classroom

SECTION III

THE MAINSTREAMING OF DEAF AND SEVERELY HARD OF HEARING SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS INTO THE REGULAR CLASSROOM

Five deaf students were interviewed for the report; one elementary deaf student, two intermediate, and two high school. There were also five severely hard of hearing students, one elementary, two intermediate, and two high school students. A peer was interviewed for each of these ten students. Because several students had the same special education or regular teacher, fewer than ten were interviewed. Teachers interviewed included eight regular teachers, three special class teachers and two specialists providing signing or other help.

Special Education Teacher Responses

Special education teachers told of the positive things which happen in the classroom with a deaf student or severely hard of hearing student among the teacher's regular students. One teacher said that by placing the deaf and severely hard of hearing on a regular school campus, they become better prepared for functioning in normal society.

Special education teachers emphasized that, although many deaf students are good models who conscientiously work and involve themselves in the daily classroom activities, when they do misbehave or become negative in their attitude they don't receive the same consequences as the regular students who misbehave. A high school resource teacher suggested that a resource teacher of the deaf be available at the continuation high school.

The unique things special education teachers and support staff need to do for the deaf and severely hard of hearing students are to interpret everything for them that is possible, even jokes and little comments. The regular teachers have interpreters available to use signing with the students if they themselves don't use sign. Often, teachers act out what they are saying, point to the board, or write out what they wish the students to know.

The only problems teachers had with deaf and hard of hearing students was finding the extra time to prepare remedial learning

materials for them. They also cautioned future teachers of the deaf to make sure students understand new vocabulary words and not to assume they comprehend the words just because they nod their heads positively. However, regular teachers found the interpreters were resourceful and cooperative assistants in the classroom who helped regular teachers with these problems.

The greatest concerns expressed by the special education teachers and for future regular teachers as well, with respect to having deaf students in their classes, were to be sure that the students understand the lessons, and take part in the class discussions, with the use of signing.

Teachers felt that good signing skills and knowledge of special techniques to teach the deaf were very essential for optimum learning for the deaf, and especially important was the use of visual aides to stimulate interest in the subjects being taught.

Teachers had to get used to being visible all the time in the classroom while they talked to students, because deaf and severely hard of hearing students needed to see the teacher's face in order to comprehend what was going on.

It was strongly felt that district inservicing was important to back up the inservice by special education teachers for the regular staff. It was generally felt that the close on-going rapport between regular and special education teachers helps the mainstreaming of the deaf and severely hard of hearing students become more and more successful. Special education teachers believed that keeping the lines of communication continually open among teachers and administration was something that should never be overlooked.

It was felt by some special education teachers that the regular teachers of the deaf and handicapped should be compensated in some way for their increased time and effort with the hard of hearing. There might be a smaller class load, or teachers could receive one credit as in ADA.

Regular Teacher Responses

Responses from regular teachers to having a deaf or severely hard of hearing student in their classrooms was overwhelmingly positive. "Kids are learning the sign language and can already communicate with our deaf student," exclaimed one of the teachers.

The educators felt their students were sensitive and responsive to the deaf students in class. One teacher explained that she had several students who were interested in the interpreter and expressed enthusiasm about taking courses in the use of sign.

Generally, teachers felt there were no problems except sometimes they'd find two students signing to one another and would have to walk up to them to get their attention. Sometimes the class was slowed down because the teacher needed to qualify an explanation to the handicapped student, or had to wait for the interpreter to finish, but this also presented no real problem.

Because of the presence of the deaf or severely hard of hearing students in the regular classroom, interpreters were absolutely necessary. Teachers agreed they had to talk more slowly and give the interpreter time to sign to the handicapped student.

One teacher said he learned to point to things more often for the deaf student and discovered that this technique aided the entire class. Another teacher was slightly annoyed because of the extra paper work due to the special students in his classroom. The regular classroom teachers felt though that there were no problems with the inclusion of deaf students in their classes, and were excited to have them because of the enriching experience they shared with their regular students.

The main concern of the regular teachers about having a deaf student in their classroom was that the handicapped student would understand and receive oral feedback in class discussions. Their suggestions to future teachers of the deaf were to have a trained interpreter; one they would be able to share materials with, rely upon, and one they could work with easily in their classroom.

They suggested that future teachers would need to learn techniques of pointing, and would need to accustom themselves to be in view of the deaf students at all times. They emphasized that it was important not to baby the deaf students or treat them in special ways because of their handicaps.

It was suggested that the special education teacher and special education administrators could help the integration of children who were deaf and severely hard of hearing by providing qualified interpreters, (especially in math because the words used are so important.) Also, it was suggested that by giving the regular classroom teachers a checklist of all students' needs, their capabilities, and information about their handicaps, the integration of the handicapped would be smoother. Teachers emphasized the need for substitutes for interpreters who were qualified in the use of signing.

Teachers of the deaf handicapped should be notified ahead of time that the psecial students would be present in their classrooms so that learning material could be prepared on time.

Special Education Student Responses

Special education students responded positively when asked how they felt about having classes with regular teachers and regular students. They liked having the interpreter, and the students seemed to have many friends in both the special education and regular classes.

Deaf special education students said that when the interpreter left their class, the regular students made sure they knew what was going on by spelling to them or writing them notes. This was so in both the special education classes and the regular classes.

Deaf and severely hard of hearing special education students helped other students in both their special education classes and their regular classes. Sometimes they helped students by correcting their signs and they helped the teachers too, by passing out papers and stacking books neatly on the shelves. The handicapped students enjoyed aiding their teachers in any way they were asked.

Regular Student Responses

Just as the deaf special education students liked helping the regular students with learning sign, the regular students, too, enjoyed interpreting for the special education children and explaining things slowly to them. They enjoyed having the deaf students with their class.

SECTION IV

The Mainstreaming of the Orthopedic and Other Health Impaired Special Education Students into the Regular Classroom

SECTION IV

THE MAINSTREAMING OF THE ORTHOPEDIC AND OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRED SEPCIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS INTO THE REGULAR CLASSROOM

There were five elementary orthopedically handicapped students interviewed, one intermediate, and one high school orthopedic student. And there were two intermediate other health impaired students questioned, and one high school other health impaired student. Ten student peers were interviewed and ten regular teachers. Not all students were in special education classes, so only six special education teachers (five resource specialist and one special day class) were interviewed.

Special Education Teacher Responses

Most special education teachers agreed that the orthopedically or other health impaired students in their classes were model students and model people. In addition to finding that these handicapped students were highly motivated academically, they allowed the regular students the opportunity to experience them as total people, and not just handicapped people. No special education teachers found problems mainstreaming these students into their classrooms.

There were a few special things teachers of orthopedically handicapped students needed to do to accommodate them. Some handicapped students needed a variety of tasks to do which weren't lengthy. Some physical facilities had to be changed. For example, a finger guard had to be installed in an electric typewriter. Some handicapped students needed extra time for testing because they had writing difficulties.

Special education teachers' main concerns with respect to having handicapped students in their classes were seeing that they worked in a relaxed atmosphere; instructing students about the safety factors involved in the use of a wheelchair; selecting materials for differing students' abilities; and most importantly, keeping some of the orthopedically handicapped students from using their conditions as excuses for poor attendance, or poor performance. They discussed the fact that it was important to establish good rapport with their students' parents before a two- or three-week period passed. Future teachers also need to be made aware of the many mechanical appliances and tools available for the orthopedically handicapped students.

Special education teachers and special education administrators might help the integration of children with orthopedically or other health impaired problems by conducting more frequent inservice for regular and special education personnel. The purpose of the inservice would be to establish appropriate academic and behavioral expectations and counsel and discipline the students accordingly.

Special education teachers suggested that the nurse come to talk about the handicaps of students and the therapy that is used. The nurse could also be asked to discuss the safety and uses of the wheelchair. Special education teachers and regular teachers wished to be notified in advance before the arrival of the handicapped students.

Regular Teacher Responses

Regular teachers responded to the question of what good things their students experienced with a handicapped student in their rooms by praising their regular students for their empathy, consideration, sympathy, and compassion towards the orthopedically and other health impaired children.

One regular teacher stated that he had to write a special short answer test for his orthopedically handicapped student. Another regular teacher needed to help his student with many minor self-help skills, like tying his shoes, picking up his pencil, and typing. Still another regular classroom teacher found it necessary to dismiss her orthopedically handicapped student early from class so she could have time to get to another class and to also have time to empty her Foley catheter.

One teacher designed a special seating arrangement for his handicapped student so he could get around more easily, and one teacher interviewed designed a special P.E. program for his handicapped student which emphasized small motor training.

None of the regular teachers of the orthopedically or other health impaired students found problems with their students in class.

The greatest concerns with respect to having a handicapped student in the regular teachers' classrooms were that the child be safe during an emergency, and that he be included in everything as far as he would be physically able to be. Other concerns were that the student be able to get between classes safely, and that teachers encourage the handicapped student to be independent, and organized, and to develop study habits and complete tasks. It was recommended by these teachers that all of these concerns be discussed with the future classroom teachers.

Special education teachers and administration might better integrate children with orthopedic and other health impaired handicaps by providing consultation for the classroom teachers before the handicapped child is in class. The inservice would give background about the students' limitations, their backgrounds, and the different kinds of wheelchairs - or other classroom adaptations - they require. Teachers generally felt that they were not sufficiently prepared to supply an educational and environmental setting to meet the capabilities and disabilities of each child.

Special Education Student Responses

Special education students felt favorable about having classes with regular teachers. From their responses it was found that most of the special education students had more friends from the regular classes than from their special education classes.

Special education students said that the students in their regular classes helped them if they needed help. Most of the assistance centered around reading problems, carrying their lunch trays, and gathering their books and papers for class. One student said a regular student from his class helped him to understand other peoples' problems.

Special education students who're orthopedically or other health impaired helped students in their special classes and regular classes with things like pronouncing words; by acting as friends who understood problems; and by just being nice to the students. These special education students helped their special ed teachers and regular classroom teachers to pass out papers and straighten the books in the classroom.

Regular Student Responses

Regular students helped handicapped students with orthopedic and other health impairments to do special things, like just talking and being friendly. They stated they got paper and books for the special ed student. One said she helped her thread her needle. Another pushed a special ed orthopedic child to the lunch room, got his lunch, paid the lady, and then took him for a ride onto the playground.

Regular students were helped by special ed students with orthopedic problems in a variety of ways, too. A regular student said a special education student kept him laughing. One regular student said he enjoyed having a special ed student as a friend. Another stated a special ed student helped him with his spelling. The regular students unanimously agreed that they felt good about having special education students in their classes.

SECTION V

The Mainstreaming of the Mentally Retarded Special Education Students into the Regular Classroom

SECTION V

THE MAINSTREAMING OF THE MENTALLY RETARDED SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS INTO THE REGULAR CLASSROOM

Because of their lack of understanding, it was not possible to conduct interviews with five younger mentally retarded students, so observations were made in the special education and regular (integrated) classes. Interviews were held with one upper elementary and four high school students; three of these were 19-year-old students who were part of the ROP program. Two regular students and teachers from the elementary and the high school program were interviewed. The special education teachers included three special class, one adaptive P.E., and three vocational specialists.

Special Education Teacher Responses

Special education teacher responses to having a mentally retarded student in the classroom were that the regular students just don't accept any immature behavior from them and consequently immature behavior is minimized. The teachers were surprised to discover that the mentally retarded students were very well behaved. There were no problems reported in any of the special education teachers' classrooms.

When questioned about having to do special things because of the mentally retarded students in their classes, teachers responded that nothing was done for them that wasn't also done for the rest of the regular students in their classes. One teacher explained that he spent some extra time every day with one of his mentally retarded students when the rest of his class had already gone home, but that there was no problem with doing that. Special education teachers counseled with their regular students prior to integrating these students into the classroom. Everyone got along beautifully according to the special education teachers.

Because mentally retarded students have unique learning styles, the special ed teachers felt that methods they learned to use with them should be passed along to the students' future teachers. Their greatest concerns were to get these students to express themselves verbally instead of acting everything out. The teachers felt that the more they got the mentally retarded students to talk in class, the better behaved they became, and the better socially integrated they were.

Special education teachers had some strong opinions about the ways administrators could help to integrate mentally retarded children into special education classes. They strongly agreed that aides for their special and regular classes and handicapped students were very important. They requested that more film strips similar to the popular "Walk in Another Pair of Shoes" be made available to them at a lower interest and lower understanding level. One teacher suggested the need for more information about the more severe disabilities, such as Downs Syndrome.

Regular Teacher Responses

Reactions from regular classroom teachers to having mentally retarded students in their classrooms were very positive. Generally, teachers felt that if these students had a job geared to their abilities they did outstandingly well.

Regular teachers found that the special things they needed to do in their classrooms for mentally retarded students included making lists of things for the student to do every day; reminding them to catch the RT bus back to their schools; and reminding the younger students to go to the bathroom. There were no problems because the special day class aides came to every class with these students and assisted the teachers. One teacher expressed a problem when she was absent from school, as the mentally retarded student didn't adjust well to a substitute teacher. The employers from the community gave teachers suggestions for basic skills to be learned which provided the regular teachers input for their curriculum.

Concerns for the older mentally retarded handicapped student in the regular teachers' classes were that they learn something that could be carried into their adult lives. One regular teacher felt that these students should learn respect for the job and know that it was important to do very well and not just see the job as a fun game. For future teachers of mentally retarded students it was suggested that the special ed teachers observe the future class to determine whether the student would have the skills to be able to successfully participate in a regular curriculum.

When asked what more the special education teachers and administration might do to help the integration of children who are mentally retarded teachers had several concrete suggestions. They expressed a need for the help from qualified aides while these students were in the regular classrooms.

They suggested that the vocational education and the special education people work more closely together in order to start a prevocational education program in the early grades for these students. One request from a regular teacher of the handicapped was that a person be in charge

of finding actual jobs that these students could work at successfully in the outside world. This person could go out to places of business, like K-Mart, Woolworth's, and Bob's Big Boy, and speak to people in charge about accepting a mentally retarded student on a work experience basis.

Teachers wanted to know more about Downs Syndrome. They also wanted lists of skills the mentally retarded students had mastered. Teachers felt a great need to know ways to communicate with these mentally retarded students more successfully.

Student Responses

Due to the lack of integration of mentally retarded students in the regular classroom only one integrated high school student, one integrated elementary school student and three students at Laurel Ruff (special center school) were interviewed. A high school student at a regular high school reported that this student was like "one of the regular guys." He helped him when the mentally retarded student asked for help.

The elementary student's reaction to having a mentally retarded student in his class was one of great enthusiasm. The whole class was sincerely happy when this mentally retarded student accomplished something. The student explained that when this mentally retarded child picked up the wrong color crayon the teacher told him and the rest of the class not to correct the student because he needed to learn for himself.

One mentally retarded student's feelings about being integrated into an adaptive P.E. class was that he enjoyed it greatly, and he was very proud about keeping it spic and span.

Several older mentally retarded students interviewed were included in the regular ROP program and worked in various community commercial businesses like Montgomery Ward's, the Sunrise Ranch Supply, and Lumberjack stores. They were proud about what they were doing. It made them feel important. They said they felt their fellow workers were very friendly towards them and sincerely concerned about them.

Their tasks included unloading trucks, taking out trash, folding towels and straightening counters. One student was successful in answering the telephone. The same mentally retarded student measured out feed supplies and packaged and marked them as well.

SECTION VI

Suggestions to Administrators for Improvement of SJUSD Special Education Mainstreaming Program

SECTION VI

SUGGESTIONS TO ADMINISTRATORS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF SJUSD SPECIAL EDUCATION MAINSTREAMING PROGRAM

From the information gathered on the study of regular classroom integration for special education students with physical, visual, auditory and mental impairments, suggestions were made to administrators of the program for improvement.

Teachers serving all of the four categories of handicapped children requested that more inservice training be provided to regular teachers. They were especially concerned that prior notice be given to regular teachers before the inclusion of special education students in their classrooms.

Teachers were unanimous in their appeal for more support people who possess special education skills. Substitutes without signing skills were of little value in the classroom for auditory handicapped, according to the educators, and substitutes without knowledge of handicapped children in general actually disrupted the school day.

The main concern of regular teachers was that all staff who would be involved with special education handicapped children be informed in advance of the arrival of a handicapped child in the classroom. Individual instructors should be told that the principals and/or vice principals in their schools are the people to see for assistance regarding the special students. The site administrators should be informed that they are to refer teachers to the site area resource teachers (program specialists) for further assistance only when they are unable to provide for the particular student's needs.

Blind/Visually Impaired

Regular teachers must understand the need to select materials early for the braillist to code them. It was suggested that there are many resource books such as dictionaries and encyclopedias already available in braille and large print for the use of blind/visually impaired students.

Deaf/Severely Hard of Hearing

It was suggested that a resource teacher of the deaf might be needed at a continuation school.

It was suggested that films and filmstrips be developed for the deaf showing the use of interpreters and how they work with the special education students. Also, film strips with an interpreter in the corner (as on TV) were requested. Another request was for charts with emergency signs indicating phrases that might be pointed to by the teacher in emergency situations and read by the hearing impaired student.

Orthopedically Impaired

Teachers working with orthopedically impaired mentioned needs for special classroom equipment like ramps and IBM typewriters. (Ramps are not part of the special education responsibility and are to be funded from the regular school budget.) Administrators felt there was good follow up on teachers' requests for other equipment, and that IBM typewriters were moved around as needed to accommodate teachers.

Mentally Retarded

The teachers of the elementary mentally retarded children suggested that video tapes be made of the successful experiences they had already had in regular and special education classes at two district schools. These tapes could be shown to principals as well as teachers to encourage them toward integrating students with more severe disabilities.

Instructors felt vocational education and special education teachers needed to work more closely together in order to start a prevocational education program in the early grades for mentally retarded students. One request from a vocational education teacher was that there be a contact person in charge of finding jobs for mentally retarded students. This contact person could encourage employers of businesses and self-service stores to hire mentally retarded students for paying jobs.

Administrators felt that vocational rehabilitation has been a problem in the past and will continue to be one, and were well aware that steps needed to be taken to move the program along more swiftly.

SECTION VII

Summary of Findings

SECTION VII

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The summary of findings stated in this paper suggests that the handicapped children in the San Juan Unified School District are being successfully accepted by their peers and by their teachers in the regular classrooms.

The students who were interviewed for this study expressed positive attitudes about being in the regular classrooms, and frequently like the regular classes better than their special education classes.

Teachers who took part in the study also stated confidence about assimilating special students into their regular classrooms. They revealed their tendencies to have lower expectations of special education students at first. They discovered that some of these children had the same academic potential as regular students. Handicapped students, they learned, expressed the same feelings and desires as regular students, and with the proper motivation from their teachers could accomplish the same kinds of educational objectives as their peers.

The instructors learned if they babied or coddled the handicapped children, some would take advantage of their disabling conditions and would not benefit from the regular classroom experience.

Essentially, teachers discovered if they gave to their special education students the same respect, praise, guidance and structure as they gave to their regular students, they were successful in their mainstreaming attempts.

Previous studies have suggested that handicapped children often don't adjust to a regular classroom because of social ineptness. Teachers interviewed in the study, however, said they learned to help their handicapped children become more socially accepted by offering social training skills to them. Disabled children responded well to role models in the regular classroom, and to reinforcement of their acceptable social behavior by the teachers.

Instructors explained that counseling with their regular students about the arrival of special education students was helpful for a smoother mainstreaming effect.

The comments from special education teachers and regular teachers who work with the handicapped suggest that they are learning new teaching techniques from one another, and sharing appropriate methods of helping the disabled children to adjust to the regular classroom situation.

There were few negative responses. The less positive reactions were about too much paper work dealing with the handicapped students, and about some lack of administrative follow up on securing special materials for the disabled. It was felt by several instructors that requests for items such as special electric typewriters and ramps appeared to be overlooked although they were really needed.

The teachers agreed that it is essential to hire substitute teachers and other support staff who are properly qualified to teach and aid disabled students. They recommended that more inservice be provided for both special education teachers and regular teachers.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

School _____ Date _____

RSP _____ SDC _____ Other _____ Regular _____

1. How old are you? _____

2. In what grade are you? _____

3. Have you ever been in:

Reg.

(SDC teacher) _____'s class? _____

(RSP teacher) _____'s class? _____

(other special education teacher) _____'s class? _____

4. What subjects do you like best?

Spec. Ed.

5. What subjects do you have with:

Spec. Ed.

(SDC teacher) _____? _____

(RSP teacher) _____? _____

(regular teacher) _____? _____

How do you feel about having _____ with _____?
(regular teacher)

How do you feel when it's time to go to _____'s room?

6. Who are your friends in _____'s class?
(special ed. teacher)

_____'s class?
(regular teacher)

7. What do students do to help you or make it easier for you in _____'s (special ed. teacher) class?

Spec. Ed.

_____'s class?
(regular teacher)

Reg. What do you or could you do to help _____ or make it easier for _____ in your class?

8. What do you do or could you do to help other students in your special class?

Spec. Ed.

What do you do or could you do to help other students in your regular class?

to help _____ ?
(special ed. teacher)

to help _____ ?
(regular teacher)

Reg. Is there some way that _____ helps you? or could help you?

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

REGULAR/SPECIAL TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

School _____ Date _____

Regular _____ RSP _____ SDC _____ Other _____

1. What kind of special education student(s) do you serve?

2. What good things does your class experience with _____ in your room?

3. What problems does your class experience with _____ in your room?

4. What special things do you do or do you need to do because _____ is in your class?

5. Is this a problem?

6. What are your greatest concerns with respect to having _____ in your class?

   or for the next teacher to watch for?

7. What more do you think the special education teacher/administration might do to help the integration of children with this kind of handicap?

APPENDIX C

TIPS FOR TEACHERS

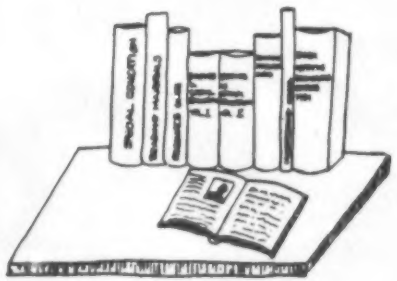
The brochure produced for distribution and duplication is reproduced on the next two pages. The copy shown is slightly reduced from the original. The original brochure is printed on 8½ X 15 goldenrod paper with a center fold and two side folds so that page one opens to reveal page two.

These tips for working with handicapped students in the regular classroom were collected from teachers in the San Juan Unified School District who were mainstreaming students with visual, auditory, physical and mental impairments.

According to these teachers, you do not need extensive training in order to integrate handicapped students--just the ability to apply good instructional practices.

For additional help

- Contact the Resource Specialist or Support Teacher at your school.
- Look for books in your public or district professional library.



Inside Left Flap

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The opinions expressed are those of the project staff and do not reflect the official position of the state.

Project Staff

Nancy C. Enell, Director
Jean Strange, Investigator
Barbara Lamb and Connie Barr, Publications Staff

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Back Cover

MAINSTREAMING IN THE REGULAR CLASSROOM

Front Cover

TIPS FOR TEACHERS

The following tips were emphasized by teachers who are mainstreaming handicapped students:

- Get as much information as possible about students' handicaps in advance of their enrollment.
- Maintain your academic and behavioral expectations and apply the usual discipline rules. Consequences for misbehavior should be the same as for regular students.
- Use your regular vocabulary, including *read*, *look*, *walk*, and *listen*--these are common expressions even if applied differently by some handicapped students.
- Expect your regular students to become more aware and sensitive. As one teacher said of regular students,

"They have learned compassion and understanding as they never would have learned in any other way."

Inside Right Flap

• A mainstreaming teacher suggests, *"We need to think of things these students are capable of doing--rather than their limitations."*

THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

- Orient students to your room arrangement, including desks, cupboards and doors.
- Provide enough desk space for braille, large print books or tape recorders--they can be very bulky.
- Get classroom materials and additional help from the vision specialist.
- Use lots of verbal cues in conversation--names, feelings, locations.
- Plan needed student classroom materials early in order to have them redone in larger print, braille, or recorded on tape.

- Keep expectations as high for blind or visually impaired students as for regular students, but allow extra time for completing assignments and exams.

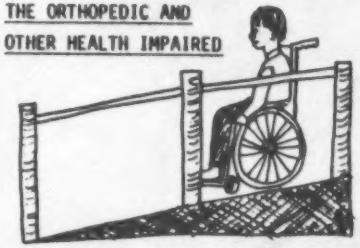
THE DEAF AND SEVERELY HARD OF HEARING

- All hearing impaired students get clues from reading lips. Let them see your face.
- The overhead projector is a great aid. It enables the teacher to face the students while they "see" what is being said and written.

- Use pointing as an addition to your verbal cues.

- Request aides, tutors and substitutes who know and can use sign language.
- Encourage regular students to learn signing. They can assist the hearing impaired in academic and social learning.
- Expect the best from these students.

THE ORTHOPEDIC AND OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRED



- Teach regular students about the safety factors involved in use of a wheelchair.
- Design your classroom to accommodate wheelchairs or other special seating arrangements.
- Learn about facilities available for the handicapped, like the field trip busses, special ramps, and special typewriters.
- Prepare in advance for emergency procedures such as fire drills.

- Find short-term assignments for physically handicapped students so they won't become fatigued and lose interest.
- Don't excuse these students from assignments. Do excuse them from class early to allow extra time for getting to the next class.

THE MENTALLY RETARDED

- Mentally retarded students can be trained to follow directions, especially when they have a simple daily checklist to follow.
- Gear special repetitive jobs to these students and they do very well.

- Remind mentally retarded students about little things regular students wouldn't need to be reminded of, such as getting lunch, toileting.
- Get students to express themselves in class to facilitate their communication with the public and their social integration.
- Request understanding substitute teachers, as these students find it difficult to adjust to changes and new role models.
- Expect learning to take extra time because these students require many repetitions and frequent reviews.

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